

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

October 20, 2006

The Honorable Alberto Gonzales  
Attorney General  
Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Attorney General Gonzales:

We are writing to express our serious concerns about recent activity in the state of Georgia involving misleading information provided to voters. This misinformation could potentially keep hundreds of thousands of citizens away from the polls this upcoming election day.

As you know, the State of Georgia passed – and the Department of Justice (DOJ) “pre-cleared” – a law that would require Georgia citizens to provide specific photo identification at the polls for voting purposes. Despite your agency’s pre-clearance of the law and others like it, courts across the country have soundly rejected such provisions as unconstitutional and unduly burdensome on voters. On September 19, 2006, after the federal courts had already rejected the Georgia provision, a Georgia judge rejected the photo identification requirement. The judge clearly stated in his decision that the requirement “cannot be.”

Following the state court’s decision, Georgia election officials publicly stated that voters would not need photo identification at the polls. Nevertheless, in direct contravention of the court’s ruling, the State Election Board sent letters after the court issued its ruling to approximately 200,000 voters informing them that they would be required to present photo identification at the polls. Apparently another 100,000 letters had been sent just prior to the issuance of the judge’s decision, meaning that at least 300,000 voters were sent misleading information by the State Election Board.

While the State Election Board now intends to send letters to Georgia voters assuring them that photo identification is not required, the Board has created a situation that is at best confusing, and at worst will keep thousands of voters away from the polls this election day.

In this election season, existing laws must be enforced. It is imperative that politics not trump our civic obligation as public servants, which is to encourage the nation’s citizens to participate in our democracy. We are pleased with your decision to

review the recent deceptive letter campaign targeting Latino voters in Orange County, California. We urge you to also investigate the actions in Georgia to determine whether there was a specific intent to defy the court's decision and mislead voters or whether that was an unintended result. Please notify us by October 25, 2006, as to whether you will open such an investigation. Thank you.

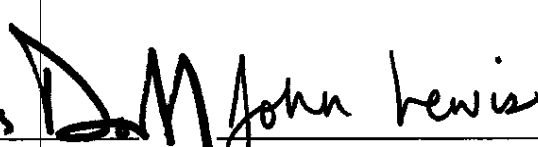
Sincerely,



Barack Obama  
United States Senator



Christopher J. Dodd  
United States Senator



John Lewis  
United States Representative